

THE BAPTIST RECORD. FAMILY CIRCLE.

CONDUCTED BY
MRS. J. E. GAMBRELL.

Under the shadow.

O God! I come to Thee
With empty arms, and heart of life bereft:
With not one hope or earthly comfort left:
Dear Father, pity me!

I come to Thee for light:
As earthly comforts die—so must I look
Above, And in the refuge of Thy sheltering love
I may forget my night.

Once human love was sweet:
The heart is human, and hath human
Needs, And often in its helplessness it pleads
For that which is not meet!

O God! how could I know—
How could I see, with my weak, human
Eyes, That what I prayed for was a fair disguise
To hide this bitter woe?

O, how could I foresee
All the dread anguish and this dark despair
That came to me with my soul's answered
Prayer?

Dear Father, comfort me!
Clasp me within Thine arms!
And let Thy blessed love encircle me:
I have no other refuge save in Thee—
Since earth hath lost its charms.

Illume my darkened way!
Out from the shadows of this earthly
Night, O lead my darkened soul into the glorious
Light.

Of Thy most perfect day!
—Frag of our Union.

Elder Melvin's Prize.

I feel that I should apologize to
the competitors for this prize for
having kept them so long in sus-
pense. I have appreciated their an-
xiety, and sympathized with them
in their eagerness to hear the result
of their labors. But I have been quite
unwell for more than two months,
and have been obliged to tax their
patience. I hope they will excuse
my seeming neglect. Miss Ida Cham-
ber, of Cuba Station, Ala., sent cor-
rect answers to every one of the
questions except the one about the
two Christian Lawyers. She gave
the answer "Zenias and Apollon,"
whereas Brother Melvin's answer
was "Zenias and Joseph of Arima-
then." I received correct answers to
all the questions except two from
John and Henry Coleman, of Yazoo
City. J. S. Riser, of Midway, sent
up correct answers to all except
three. If he answered other ques-
tions the answers failed to reach me.
I have been surprised at the ap-
pointment of the prize. They have
been careful and painstaking
in their study of the Bible, and have
learned many valuable lessons from
the precious Word. I must com-
ment them on their neatly written
letters, and especially on the correct
spelling. Will Brother Melvin tell
in the next Record if the prize is
won by any one? M. T. G.

Willie or George?

BY REV. C. M. LIVINGSTON.

"My own precious brother going
to die—leave us! leave me!
Never, never see him again! Can't
you do something, doctor?"

"I've done all I can—all any one
can, my poor child. I must tell you
the whole truth, for you will soon
see it; your brother is very near his
end, and—"

"Oh! don't say it, don't Dr. Max-
well; you must not—you shall not;
we will not let him die. It would
kill mother. What would we do
without precious Willie?" And
throwing herself upon the lounge,
the heart-broken sister gave way to
a flood of tears. Her moans were
heard in the room where her brother
Willie was sweetly breathing his
life out on the bosom of an unseen
Friend. He was full of peace—and
above the sobs and groans of wait-
ing ones, he would break forth in
singing as though he was about to
join the heavenly choir. Stopping
from falling strength, he called for
his sister Mary, and was answered
with her piercing cry of agony from
the next room. But she was soon
by his side to receive his last tender
words, commending her to Jesus,
whose grace is promised his own
sorrowing ones in every time of
need. Lifting a last sweet trusting
look to father, mother, brother
George, his faithful physician, and
much-loved pastor, he said: "Blessed
Savior, into Thy hands I commit my
spirit—"

And it was all over. Willie
Langston was over on the other
shore, singing with angels and the
spirits of just men made perfect.

Mary's hands were unclasped from
those of the departed one, and she
was gently lifted and carried to her
own room and tenderly laid upon her
own bed to weep over what seemed to
her the most dreadful calamity that
could possibly come into their happy
home.

"Why did He do it? Take my
own precious one away! So good,
so beautiful; never was such a
brother. Oh what trouble like this!
We were such a happy family. Now
this has come. Why was it my brother?
Come back; oh come back,
Willie!"

But Willie was listening to the
voice of his Redeemer and the mu-
sic of "harpers, harping with their
harp." What could draw him back
to a valley of tears and clouds from
"A land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign!"
Willie will never return to earth
until he comes with the Lord, de-

scending the skies with ten thousand
of his saints.

It was in vain that her kind pas-
tor told Mary of Willie's being now
syntest in glory, and that he was all
ripe for heaven, and wanted so much
to be where the Savior reigns; that
this world is not our home, and that
in a very little while we may all see
dear Willie wearing his crown, if we
are faithful unto death; that we can-
not say what might have happened
to Willie if he had stayed here and
grogged to manhood; so many young
men fall into temptation and bring
sorrow to their homes, bringing the
gray hair of father and mother with
sorrow to the grave.

"Oh, nothing so terrible can hap-
pen to us as precious Willie's dying.
If he could but have lived! I
wouldn't have cared if he had been
a little fat, if I could only have
seen him and been with him, and
heard him talk and sing."

"Poor child, I fear you do not
know what you are saying. There
are worse things than this peaceful
death of your brother. You need
not weep any more for him or ever
be troubled about him, or lie awake
nights wondering where he is or what
he is doing. He is safe, Mary, safe.
Can you be quite sure of that for any
living young man? Do you know
that nine out of ten go astray, and
that it might have—"

"No, no, no, my brother would
never have gone astray. I wouldn't
have let him. I would have kept
him at home, and made it so pleas-
ant with him and been patient with
him and watched if anything should
have happened. No, no, no," al-
most shouted the wretched sister in
her excitement, "my brother never
would have done wrong. I would
have lived for him. Oh, I wish I
could die with him! What is there
to live for now?"

"For your dear, sorrowing parents,
Mary, and for your brother George.
Willie does not need you any more;
George will for years."

And the gentle, faithful minister
fell upon his knees before God, and
his voice was mingled with the sobs
of father and mother and George,
entraining so earnestly and persist-
ently. As he closed his prayer whis-
per—"Amen!" came from several
voices—none, however, from Mary,
who refused to be comforted, or to
say in her heart, "The will of the
Lord be done." The Lord gave and
the Lord hath taken away, blessed
be the name of the Lord.

Twelve months later, Mary and
George were spending the evening
across the way with a very dear
friend. A few other young people
were there. The hours were passing
pleasantly by. At ten o'clock "re-
freshments" were served, a "little"
wine among the rest. Her "very
dear friend" offered it to Mary. She
hesitated a moment; her face
crimsoned; she remembered the
words of her pastor spoken to her
just one year before: "George
will need you for years," and her
warm statement, "No, no, no, my
brother would never have gone
astray. I wouldn't have let him. I
would have kept him at home * *
and watched * * and * * I
would have lived for him." She
knew that the eyes of several broth-
ers, her own among the rest, were
bent upon her and perhaps their
eternal fate was hanging upon her
taking and tasting or not tasting
that wine. But something kept say-
ing: "It's only this once; nobody
need drink because you do. Don't
make a martyr of yourself. Drink
what is set before you, taking no
questions. May be it is the mildest
kind of wine. Are you going to be
discourteous to your friend in her
own house, and offend her forever,
and perhaps make yourself a laugh-
ing stock and do no good to any one."

She took it and drank it—the con-
fident sister, who "would have
watched over her precious Willie,"
if he only could have lived.

George had never seen wine of-
fered to guests before. He knew
how bitterly opposed to its use his
parents were. Often had he heard
Mary's denunciation of families who
dared to offer the intoxicating cup,
and her indignant denial of the pos-
sibility of her intimate friend's drink-
ing that very thing. When he saw
his own sister lift that cup to her
lips and actually exhaust it with a
gay laugh, and even with a fling
at "total abstinence," astonishment,
shame and confusion seized his mind,
and, as in a moment, he reasoned all
his former conviction away, and in
imitation of his sister, he grasped the
proffered glass, and—like it. And
when the company dispersed that
evening, George Langston staggered
homeward, his watchful (?) sister try-
ing to steady his steps, though her
self just merry enough with the wine
to keep her from realizing that a
darker shadow was about to cross
the home threshold than the death of
"precious Willie."

George "liked it." And almost
with the first taste, he held out his
hands, body and soul for king Al-
cohol to put on his chains. A few
months sufficed him to find the de-
sire of strong drink and to like the base
men who gathered there, and to
come reeling home at midnight, curs-
ing his father for keeping him out
in the cold so long; cursing his moth-
er, for her tears; cursing, sometimes

beating, his sister for her reproaches.
Rum made rapid time with a tem-
perament such as George Langston's.
Such would it do with some of my
young readers if you but step on
board this "Black Valley Train" by
taking the first glass.

As the months went whirling by,
and each night was a night of terror
in the Langston home by the com-
ing of a drunkard, his clothes be-
fouled with the filth of gutters from
which he had dragged himself; his
eyes bloodshot, his words mutter-
ings, obscenity, blasphemy. Mary
Langston at last understood that the
peaceful bed-chamber, where a Chris-
tian brother dies in triumph, is one
thing, while that of a living maniac
brother, maddened with rum, is
quite another.

"Oh!" groaned the poor girl, on
one of those dark nights when a
fearful storm was raging without,
and in the next room where Willie
had slept in Jesus so lately, the awful
screams of delirium tremens were
uttered, "would to God he had died
when Willie died, in his beauty and
innocence! I thought it was all a
calamity there; I found fault with
my heavenly Father; I inwardly
cursed the doctor for saying he must
die, and our faithful minister, who
tried to comfort me with the words:
'Taken from the evil to come,' and I
almost hated father and mother for
saying, 'The will of the Lord be
done.' I wouldn't—I could not
say 'Amen' to our minister's prayer
of resignation. I refused to be com-
forted. I knew it was all wrong
then, that God was cruel, that the
shock would kill dear mother. Oh,
how blind I was and rebellious; and
now—hear him, hear him; what
dreadful oaths—and you did it—
aye, you taught me—you; curses,
hell's curses upon my sister—What
does he mean? Who did it? Did
what? cried the terrified Mary, as
she sprang into the room of her dy-
ing brother.

"There she comes, tempter, de-
stroyer," raved the maniac, at the
top of his voice, as he sat up in bed
and with clenched fists, hurled
bitter curses at his sister. "See me,
Mary, I'm doomed! doomed! No
drunkard shall enter the kingdom of
heaven—and I'm one! I, George
Langston, your brother; and you,
you, you, the slut, led me astray
first. Curses on you!" and he fell
back a corpse.

There's a greater calamity than
the dying of a child of God. That
is but going home to die no more.
That greater is the First Glass, with
the serpent and with its adder at the
last.

May our heavenly Father give you
grace to say, when he calls from
your home a dear one up higher, as
did a Christian mother, when looking
into the coffin of her darling child:
"I wish you much joy, my darling,"
and to call nothing but a calamity.

Something About Stairs.

As pins have saved a great many
people's lives by not swallowing
them, so stairs have saved a great
many women's tempers and health
by not having them to climb. Three
days a week, at least, the mother
of a family who does her own work,
must be on her feet from morning
till night—washing day, ironing day,
baking day—and in this count,
sweeping day and the day for gener-
al house-work is not enumerated. If
her working rooms are all on one
floor, her task is hard enough, but
suppose her kitchen is in a basement
and her dining-room and sitting-
room on the second floor, and her
wood-house a step or two down, and
her water likewise, the addition to
the labor required is simply enor-
mous. A house might as well be
built on a steep hill-side, so far as
doing the work is concerned, as to
be built with steps from one room
to the other. The woman who does
her own work ought to have, on ab-
solutely one level, the kitchen, the
pantry, the dining-room, the nursery
and be able to get work and water
without taking one step up or down.

Some years ago we took a journey
and during our absence secured a
woman with three or four children
to occupy our house and take care of
it and the children we left behind.
She was a woman who never opened
her mouth but to complain of some-
thing or other, and on our return we
began to dread meeting her and list-
ening to her various fault-finding
with what she had had to put up with
while we were away. Our house
was situated on the top of a hill, so
that there was no trouble about
drainage, and all the rooms were on
one floor, and so little raised above
the ground that the baby could roll
from any one of its floor doors with-
out hurting it, and creep from the
grass to the carpet, and the carpet
to the grass without assistance. It
was easy to see at the first salutation
when we entered the house that
everything had gone smoothly, and
we might have stayed away a month
longer just as well as not, so far as
the family life behind was concerned.

"This is such an easy house to do
work in," said the woman. "I can
go around all day, every day of the
week, and not begin to feel so tired
as I do after one day of work in the
house I'm going back to." And over
afterward when any allusion was
made to the time she spent in the
house, it was always met with her

exclamation, "That is such an easy
house to do work in!"

Perhaps, if that woman, who, by
the way, was of heavy weight, had
had an "easy house to do work in,"
she might have been all the time
sweet-tempered and contented with
life and its conditions. On the long
march, soldiers throw away one
thing and then another that at the
outset they considered necessities,
and at the end of the march are en-
cumbered with absolutely nothing
that can be dispensed with. In like
manner, women find at the end of
the long march, beginning often
with marriage and running on
through the years, that one step up
or down, becomes a burden almost
intolerable.

As the spring opens, new houses
will be built on our western prairies,
and in our villages and cities. Where
ever a step or a flight of stairs can
be avoided let it be done, and the
unnecessary waste of muscle be thus
saved.—The Housekeeper.

Straight.

A straight line is defined, mathe-
matically, to be "the shortest dis-
tance between two points." We be-
lieve in straight lines, and would ac-
tively advise all young people,
who are ambitious of attaining to
any of life's high prizes, to stick to
straight lines.

If, as a speaker, you wish to be
most effective, don't go bush-whack-
ing and circumlocuting, and so dark-
en your words with words without knowl-
edge, but drive straight at your
point.

If you want to raise money for
your church or Sunday-school, don't
attempt it by indirect and doubtful
methods—"ways that are dark, and
tricks that are vain"—but go for it
by straight, downright, straight-out
methods. State the need frankly,
and ask for the money confidently,
in the name of the Lord, and you
will not only get the money, but the
church will get an education—a be-
nevolent development—such as for
all time to come will be of incalcu-
lable value.

If you have discovered any con-
sistently characteristic in a friend or
brother, don't go round about and
bring it to his notice, but go straight
to him and tell him of his fault and
so you will do him the noblest ser-
vice, and win his lasting gratitude.

Even if a man be disposed to lie,
we should infinitely prefer to have
him do it straight; for an outright
lie is incomparably less mischievous
than one that is mixed with the
truth, to give it more dangerous cur-
rency.

If one of our boys were tempted
to try the taste of liquor, we should
prescribe for him "Jersey Light-
ning"—straight. The imminent
probability is that he would never
muster courage to make a second at-
tempt. It is the delicately "doctored"
and daintily disguised decoctions
of poison that insidiously lure our
boys to destruction. Is it any won-
der we insist upon "straight?"

It is on this same principle that
we rather take to Ingersoll's "The
bold and shameless demagogue is so
scandalously foul-mouthed, as to dis-
gust every man who is not lost al-
ready to every true and generous
sensitivity; while a soft-spoken an-
gler of skeptical doubts would be
far more dangerous to society at
large."

We have some respect for a man
who believes in what he believes in,
and speaks it out fearlessly. Oh!
for a great increase of straight-out
Baptists.—Baptist Teacher.

The Dear Old Mother.

Honor the dear old mother. Time
has scattered the snowy flakes on her
brow, plowed deep furrows on her
cheeks, but is not she sweet and
beautiful now! The lips are thin
and shrunken, but those are the lips
which have kissed many a hot tear
from the childish cheeks; and they
are the sweetest lips in the world.
The eye is dim, yet it glows with
the soft radiance of holy love which
can never fade. Ah yes, she is a
dear old mother! The sands of her
life have nearly run out, but, noble
as she is, she will go further and
reach down lower for you than any
other upon earth. You cannot walk
into a midnight where she cannot
see you; you cannot enter a prison
whose bars will keep her out; you
cannot mount a scaffold too high for
her to reach that she may kiss and
bless you in evidence of her death-
less love. When the world shall de-
spise and forsake you, when it leaves
you to die by the wayside unnoticed,
the dear old mother will gather you
up in her feeble arms and carry you
home and tell you of all your vir-
tues until you almost forget that
your soul is disgraced by vice.
Love her tenderly, and cheer her de-
clining years with holy devotion.—
Ex.

The Religious Paper.

A prominent clergyman of Chicago,
after enumerating the variety of
valuable matter usually found in a
religious weekly paper, closes with
the following remarks:

"I suppose some Christian families
feel that the price of a good religious
paper is more than they are able to
pay. But the value of such a paper,
when taken and read, is above all

price in money. The cost at the most
is only six pennies a week. There
are many mothers who so prize the
assistance of such a paper in the
education of their families that they
would sooner wear one hat less a
year than dispense with their paper.
There are fathers who would buy a
coat cheaper by the cost of the pa-
per, rather than be deprived of its
blessing. So deeply do I feel the
need of such a paper as an educa-
tional force in my own life and home,
that I count it not at all among the
luxuries, but necessities of my table.
And I am sure that where it is taken
and read, and not laid upon the shelf
to stay there, it will be an invaluable
educator of both the home and the
church in that life which we live by
the faith of the Son of God."—Ex.

Slander.

Nothing is so powerful to a per-
son as slander. Yield in the least
degree, and it will soon take posses-
sion of you. Listen once to wicked
remarks and begin yourself to re-
peat them. Only hear something
against somebody else's character
whether you believe it or not, you
will have an unpleasant feeling to-
wards him when you see him next.
You try to forget this but you can-
not; before you have had time to
recover your good opinion, you will
find you begin to suspect him.

"I dread the arrival of an Ameri-
can ship," said John Williams, the
martyr missionary to the Pacific
Islands; "for though she may have
more missionaries in her cabin, she
brings in her hold the death waters
of damnation." Quite as emphatic
was the testimony of the late Arch-
deacon of Bombay, who, after thirty
years' experience, said at a public
meeting in London: "For a really
converted Christian as the fruit of
missionary labor, the drinking prac-
tices of the English make one thou-
sand drunkards! If the English
were driven out of India to-morrow,
the chief trace of their having been
there would be the number of drunk-
ards left behind."



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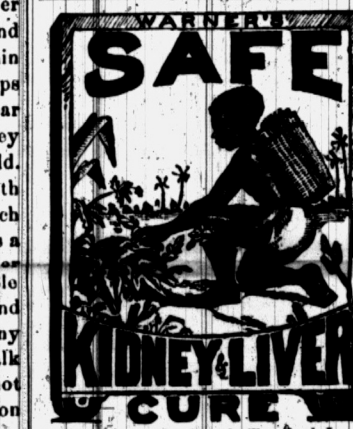
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